

UK Safety Alert

SELECTION AND USE OF CORRECT EYE PROTECTION



Injury as a result of coming into contact with cement dust



Eye Injury as a result of a severe alkali burn causing the cornea to become opaque.

Details of the Incidents

A number of recent incidents have identified that people are not always wearing the correct type of eye protection for the task they are carrying out. Two of these incidents occurred during the delivery and use of admixtures. The first was when a delivery driver was about to discharge additive into a tank on site; he decided to look into the tank to check the level when the additive splashed back and hit him in the face. The second incident occurred when an operator was removing the dispensing pipe from a defective admixture pump. Some product squirted out of the pipe and covered the operator. In a third incident a Batcher opened the batch cabin window to look into the back of a truckmixer when he got an eyeful of cement dust; cement is an alkali and can cause severe burns. In all three cases the safety glasses that were being used did not provide sufficient protection and goggles should have been worn to protect the eyes.

We have a mandatory eye protection policy on our operations. It is important to remember this does not mean that safety glasses are suitable for all tasks. Risk assessments should consider where fluids, dusts or impact could damage the eye and we must always ensure we have the most suitable eye protection.

Learning Points

- **PPE Requirements - Eye and Face Protection must be worn in hazardous areas** – Have you reviewed your risk assessments and safe systems to ensure they highlight what PPE is required, including the type of eye protection? Do all employees, contractors & visitors wear the correct level of PPE? When carrying out risk assessments, are goggles considered for tasks involving liquids and dusts, such as acid washing, pressure washing or any other task where safety glasses are not considered to give adequate protection? Are engineering controls in place that minimise the need for PPE?
- **Correct training** – Are all employees trained in the correct use of PPE? Is suitable supervision in place to ensure compliance? Is PPE compliance checked regularly, during VFL's for example?